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Cat. No. 43-785

**OWNER'S MANUAL**

Please read before using this equipment.

# TAD-285

## Microcassette Telephone Answering System with Big Button Phone, Memory, and Remote Operation

RadioShack™

# FEATURES

Your RadioShack TAD-285 Microcassette Telephone Answering System with Big Button Phone, Memory, and Remote Operation is ideal for your home or office. With its extra loud ringer and big buttons, the system is perfect for anyone who has a hard time hearing or seeing. This telephone answering system is also easy to use and has many special features.

## ANSWERING SYSTEM

**Digital Outgoing Message** — ensures the clearest possible recording of the message you leave for callers.

**Call Screening** — lets you listen while a caller leaves a message so you can decide if you want to answer the call.

**Auto-Reset** — stops recording when you pick up any phone in the house.

**Remote Operation** — lets you use a touch-tone phone (or rotary phone and pocket tone dialer) to operate the answering system while you are away from your home or office.

**Remote Answer-On** — lets you call from a remote location to set the answering system to answer calls.

**Selectable Toll Saver** — lets you avoid unnecessary toll charges when you call long-distance to check your messages.

**VOX (Voice-Activated Recording)** — stops recording after 7 seconds of silence to conserve tape space for other messages.

## TELEPHONE

**Adjustable Ringer** — allows you to set the volume level of the ringer or turn it off.

**Lighted Ringer Bar** — flashes to indicate that there is an incoming call.

**3 Priority Memories** — let you store 3 emergency telephone numbers in memory and quickly dial them by pressing a single button.

**10 Standard Memories —** let you store 10 phone numbers in memory so you can quickly dial them.

**Redial** — dials the last number dialed, with the press of a button. Useful when trying to reach a busy number.

**Flash** — generates a timed switch-hook signal for use with special services, such as Call Waiting.

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**Touch-Tone or Pulse (Rotary) Dialing** — you can use this telephone with either type of service.

This answering system has been tested and found to comply with all applicable UL and FCC standards.

We recommend you record your answering system's serial number here. The number is on the bottom of the answering system.

Serial Number: _____

**Warning**: To prevent fire or shock hazard, do not expose this product to rain or moisture.

**CAUTION**

RISK OF ELECTRIC SHOCK.
DO NOT OPEN.

**CAUTION**: TO REDUCE THE RISK OF ELECTRIC SHOCK, DO NOT REMOVE COVER OR BACK. NO USER-SERVICEABLE PARTS INSIDE. REFER SERVICING TO QUALIFIED PERSONNEL.

This symbol is intended to alert you to the presence of uninsulated dangerous voltage within the product's enclosure that might be of sufficient magnitude to constitute a risk of electric shock. Do not open the product's case.

This symbol is intended to inform you that important operating and maintenance instructions are included in the literature accompanying this product.

## READ THIS FIRST

We have designed your answering system to conform to federal regulations, and you can connect it to most telephone lines. However, each device you connect to the phone line draws power from the phone line. We refer to this power draw as the device's *Ringer Equivalence Number*, or REN. The REN is on the bottom of your answering system.

If you are using more than one device on the line, add up all the RENs. If the total is more than five, your phones might not ring and your answering system might not answer. In rural areas, a total REN of three might impair ringer operation. If ringer operation is impaired, remove a device from the telephone line.

## FCC STATEMENT

Your answering system complies with Part 68 of *FCC Rules*. You must, upon request, provide the FCC registration number and the REN to your phone company. Both numbers are on the bottom of your answering system.

**Note:** You must not connect your answering system to:

- Coin-operated systems
- Party-line systems
- Most electronic key phone systems

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# INSTALLATION

## SELECTING A LOCATION

You can set the TAD-285 on a flat surface (such as a desktop or countertop), or mount it on a wall plate or directly on the wall.

Select a location that is:

- Near an AC outlet
- Near a modular telephone line jack

If the phone line jack is not a modular jack, you must update the wiring. You can convert the wiring yourself, using jacks and adapters available at your local RadioShack store. Or, you can let the phone company update the wiring for you. The USOC number of the jack to be installed is RJ11C.

## LOADING THE CASSETTE

Your answering system comes with an MC-60 cassette tape (30 minutes of recording time per side). You can buy additional and different length cassettes at your local RadioShack store.

1. Turn the supplied cassette's hub with the tip of a pencil to take up any tape slack.

***Illust.***

2. Lift open the cassette compartment door.

***Illust.***

3. Put the cassette in the compartment with its full reel toward the front of the answering system and its open edge to the left.

***Illust.***

4. Close the compartment door.

**Note:** Replace the tape at least once a year, or more often if it is used frequently.

## CONNECTING POWER

Use the supplied AC adapter to power your answering system.

**Cautions:**

- You must use an AC adapter that supplies 9 volts of power, delivers at least 500 milliamps, and has a plug that properly fits the TAD-285's **POWER SOURCE** jack. The supplied adapter meets these requirements. Using an adapter that does not meet these specifications could damage the answering system.
- Always plug the adapter into the answering system before you plug it into an AC outlet. Always unplug the adapter from the AC outlet before you unplug it from the answering system.

***Illust.***

1. Plug the small end of the supplied AC adapter into the answering system's **POWER SOURCE** jack.
2. Plug the other end of the adapter into a standard AC outlet.

The red light on the **PLAY** button turns on while the answering system checks for an outgoing message.

If an outgoing message is already recorded, the answering system automatically plays it back. If there is no outgoing message, the answering system sounds a continuous tone until you record a message (see "Recording the Outgoing Message" on Page 6).

**Note:** When the answering system has power, if the cassette tape is broken or is not inserted properly, the system sounds a continuous tone. To stop the tone, unplug the adapter from the AC outlet. Reinsert or replace the cassette tape, then plug the adapter back into the AC outlet.

## RECORDING THE OUTGOING MESSAGE

Before you can set the answering system to answer calls and record messages, you must record the message the caller hears when the answering system answers a call.

In the message, ask for the caller's name, phone number, and message. The maximum length for your outgoing message is 30 seconds.

**Warning:** To help protect your home or office, do not tell callers you are away. Instead, say you cannot come to the phone at this time.

Follow these steps to record the outgoing message.

1. Rotate **VOLUME** toward **HI** until it clicks. The red light turns on.

***Illust.***

2. Lift open the cassette compartment door.
3. Press and hold **OGM REC/PLAY** until the red light turns off, then release the button. The answering system beeps once.

***Illust.***

4. When the red light turns on again, speak clearly in a normal volume from about 12 inches away from the microphone.

***Illust.***

5. When you finish recording your message, press **OGM REC/PLAY** again. The red light turns off, then the answering system beeps twice and plays back the message.

The message is first saved on a digital chip, and is then recorded onto the cassette tape. Wait until the answering system plays back the message before you continue installing your answering system.

The answering system saves all information, including the outgoing message, on tape so it will be saved during a power failure. When power is restored after a power failure, the answering system plays the tape automatically to restore the outgoing message to the digital chip.

## Checking the Outgoing Message

Press **OGM REC/PLAY** at any time to hear the outgoing message. The answering system beeps once and plays back the message, then beeps twice.

To adjust the volume, see “Setting the System’s Volume” on Page 13.

## PLACING THE PHONE ON A DESKTOP

To use your answering system on a desk, table, or shelf, plug one end of the supplied telephone cord into **PHONE JACK** and plug the other end into a modular phone jack, then proceed to "Connecting the Handset" on Page 10.

***Illust.***

## MOUNTING THE PHONE

Using the supplied mounting bracket, you can mount the TAD-285 on a phone jack wall plate or directly on the wall.

### On a Wall Plate

1. Plug one end of the supplied modular cord into **PHONE JACK**.

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2. Align the adapter's power cord with the left slot on the top and bottom of the mounting bracket. Align the modular cord with the right slot on the top of the mounting bracket. Pull the other end of the modular cord through the large hole in the center of the bracket.
3. Insert the mounting bracket's tabs into the slots on the bottom of the answering system. Then pull the bracket up until it snaps into place.

***Illust.***

4. Coil all the excess modular cord into the recess of the mounting bracket by pushing it back through the large hole. Leave only about 1–2 inches of the cord outside the bracket.

5. Plug the exposed end of the cord into a modular phone jack wall plate.

***Illust.***

6. Line up the keyhole slots on the bracket with the studs on the wall plate, then slide the bracket down onto the wall plate until it is secure.
7. Pull the handset holder toward you as far as it will go. Hold it out as you rotate the holder 180°, then let it snap back in place.

***Illust.***

The holder's tab helps hold the handset in the cradle while the answering system is mounted on the wall.

8. Proceed to "Connecting the Handset" on Page 10.

## Directly on the Wall

Using a drill and screws (not supplied) and the supplied mounting bracket, you can easily mount your TAD-285 directly on the wall.

1. At the desired mounting location, drill two holes 3 1/4 inches apart, one above the other.

***Illust.***

2. Thread a screw into each hole until the screw's head extends about 1/8 inch from the wall.

***Illust.***

3. Plug one end of the supplied modular cord into **PHONE JACK**.

***Illust.***

4. Align the adapter's power cord with the left slot on the top and bottom of the mounting bracket. Align the modular cord with the right slot on the top and bottom of the mounting bracket.
5. Insert the mounting bracket's tabs into the slots on the bottom of the answering system. Then pull the bracket up until it snaps into place.

***Illust.***

6. Plug the modular cord into a modular phone jack.
7. Line up the keyhole slots on the bracket with the screws on the wall, then slide the bracket down onto the screws until it is secure.

***Illust.***

8. Pull the handset holder toward you as far as it will go. Hold it out as you rotate the holder 180°, then let it snap back in place.

***Illust.***

The holder's tab helps hold the handset in the cradle while the answering system is mounted on the wall.

9. Proceed to "Connecting the Handset" on Page 10.

## CONNECTING THE HANDSET

Plug one end of the coiled handset cord into the answering system's handset jack. Plug the other end into the jack on the handset. Place the handset on the cradle.

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## SETTING THE RINGER SWITCH

To set the volume of the telephone's ringer, set the ringer switch on the back of the answering system to **LO** or **HI**.

To turn off the telephone's ringer, set the ringer switch to **OFF**. You can still make out-going calls. If you hear an extension phone ring, you can still answer calls.

***Illust.***

## SETTING THE DIALING MODE

Set **P/T** for the type of service you have — **P** for pulse (rotary) or **T** for tone. If you are not sure which type you have, do this test once you connect the phone to power.

1. Set **P/T** to **T**.

***Illust.***

2. Pick up the handset and listen for a dial tone.
3. Press any number other than 0. If the dial tone stops, you have touch-tone service. If the dial tone continues, you have pulse service. Set **P/T** to **P**.

**Notes:**

- The # button does not function when **P/T** is set to **P**.
- If you have pulse service and want to use a special service that requires tone signals (such as bank-by-phone), see "Using Tone Services with a Pulse Line" on Page 15.

# ANSWERING SYSTEM OPERATION

## SETTING THE ANSWERING SYSTEM TO ANSWER CALLS

Rotate **VOLUME** toward **HI** until it clicks. When the red light on the **PLAY** button stays on without the answering system sounding a tone, the system is ready to answer calls.

***Illust.***

The answering system hangs up and resets to answer the next call when:

- The caller hangs up.
- The maximum message length of about 60 seconds is reached.
- There are more than 7 seconds of silence.

The answering system can record up to about 29 minutes of incoming messages on the supplied tape. If the tape reaches the end while a caller is leaving a message, the answering system beeps twice and hangs up.

If the incoming message tape is full, the answering system answers a call after ten rings, plays back the outgoing message, then waits 7 seconds for the remote operation security code. If the correct code is not entered, the answering system beeps twice and hangs up. See “Remote Control Operation” on Page 17.

To have the answering system not answer calls, rotate **VOLUME** to **STOP**. The red light turns off.

## SETTING THE NUMBER OF RINGS

You can select the number of rings the answering system waits before it answers calls. Set **1.4.9.TOLL SAVER** to the desired position.

***Illust.***

The system answers calls in 1, 4, or 9 rings, or if you set the switch to **TOLL SAVER** (the last position), the answering system answers in four rings if no messages are saved or in two rings if you have messages. This feature can save you long-distance charges because, if there are no new messages, you can hang up before the answering system answers.

**Note:** If you subscribe to Caller ID, do not set **1.4.9.TOLL SAVER** to **1** (the first position), because Caller ID information is sent between the first and second rings.

## SETTING THE SYSTEM'S VOLUME

Adjust the answering system's **VOLUME** to a comfortable level. (This does not affect the volume of the message the caller hears.)

***Illust.***

## SCREENING CALLS

To screen calls, let the answering system answer them. Listen to the caller's message through the answering system's speaker. If you decide to answer the call, pick up any phone on the same phone line as the answering system. The answering system stops recording and resets to answer the next call.

**Note:** If you pick up the phone just as the answering system answers, the answering system might not stop playing the message. If this happens, hang up the phone for a moment then pick it up again.

## PLAYING MESSAGES

When you have messages, the red light on the **PLAY** button blinks. If you have four messages or less, the light blinks once for each message stored. (If you have two messages, the light blinks twice followed by a pause, then blinks twice more, and so on.) If you have more than four messages, the light blinks continuously.

To play the messages, press **PLAY**. The answering system beeps, rewinds, then plays the messages.

To pause playback for up to 60 seconds, press **PLAY**. To restart playback, press **PLAY** again.

**Notes:**

- If you do not restart playback within 60 seconds, the tape fast-forwards to the end of the last incoming message, as though playback was never started.
- If a call comes in while playback is paused, the tape immediately fast-forwards to the end of the last incoming message and then answers the call.
- After you play back all the messages, the answering system beeps twice, rewinds to the beginning, and resets to answer calls.

To save the messages, open the cassette compartment door and press **SAVE** before a new call is recorded.

***Illust.***

The answering system beeps once and the red light turns off. The tape fast-forwards to the end of all the messages and resets to answer calls. The system beeps twice and the red light blinks again.

To replay the messages, simply press **PLAY** again.

# TELEPHONE OPERATION

You can make and answer calls with this telephone as you would with any other phone. Read this section to learn about special features.

**Note:** When you receive a call, the telephone rings and the lighted ringer bar flashes.

## USING REDIAL

To quickly dial the last number dialed, press **REDIAL**. The redial memory stores up to 32 digits in both the tone and pulse modes so you can quickly redial local as well as long-distance numbers.

***Illust.***

## USING FLASH

Many special phone services, such as Call Waiting, require a switchhook signal. Pressing **FLASH** provides the electronic equivalent of a switchhook operation.

***Illust.***

For example, if you subscribe to Call Waiting, you can put your current call on hold and answer another call on the same line by pressing **FLASH**. Press **FLASH** again to alternate between the two calls.

**Note:** If you do not have any special telephone services, pressing **FLASH** might disconnect your current call.

## USING TONE SERVICES WITH A PULSE LINE

Some special services, such as alternate long-distance and bank-by-phone, require tone signals. If you have pulse service, you can still use special services by following these steps.

1. With **P/T** set to **P**, call the special service.
2. When the service answers, press ✳. Any additional numbers you dial are sent as tone signals.
3. Follow the normal procedures for the special service you are using.
4. When you complete the call, hang up the phone. The phone automatically changes back to the pulse mode.

# MEMORY DIALING

Your answering system has two types of memory — priority and standard — that let you store and easily dial up to 13 numbers.

You can store up to 3 numbers in priority memory and dial them with the press of a single button. Priority memory is often used to store emergency numbers.

You can store up to 10 numbers in standard memory and dial those numbers quickly.

## Storing a Number

1. Pick up the handset and press **STORE**, then enter the telephone number.

***Illust.***

**Note:** You will not hear any tones as you enter the phone number.

2. Press **STORE** again, then press the memory location number (**0**–**9**) on the keypad to store the number in standard memory, or press any one of the three direct memory keys (, , or ) to store the number in that priority memory.
3. Hang up the phone.

## Dialing a Stored Number

To dial a number stored in standard memory, press **MEMORY**, then press the memory location number. The telephone automatically dials the number stored in that location.

***Illust.***

To dial a number stored in priority memory, press one of the three direct memory keys (, , or ). The telephone automatically dials the number stored there.

***Illust.***

**Important:** When testing a stored emergency number, make the test call during off-peak hours (early in the morning or late at night). Stay on the line to explain the reason for your call.

# REMOTE CONTROL OPERATION

While you are away from your home or office, you can use a touch-tone phone or a pulse phone with a pocket tone dialer to:

- Set the answering system to answer calls
- Play your messages
- Erase your messages

## REMOTE ANSWER-ON

You can use any remote phone to set the answering system to answer calls if:

- The answering system has power.
- The cassette is loaded.
- The answering system is off.

To set the answering system to answer calls, dial your phone number and wait about 60 seconds until the answering system answers. Then hang up the phone.

**Note:** Be sure to turn on the system when you get home, to play back any recorded messages.

## REMOTE PLAYBACK

You must know your remote operation security code to play back your messages from a remote phone. This code (a 3-digit number) is printed on the bottom of your answering system.

To play back your messages from a remote phone, follow these steps.

1. Dial your phone number.

   If the answering system is set to **TOLL SAVER**, it answers on the second ring if there are messages. If there are no messages, the answering system answers on the fourth ring.

2. When the outgoing message stops and a beep sounds, enter the remote operation security code within 5 seconds. Be sure each button press is at least $^1/_2$ second long. The answering system sounds a tone while the tape rewinds. If no tone sounds, re-enter the code.

   **Note:** If you do not enter the code within 5 seconds, the answering system hangs up.

The answering system plays back the incoming messages. At the end of all the messages, you hear various single beeps and tones, then the answering system sounds four short beeps.

**Note:** The answering system automatically saves your messages after remote playback.

To replay the messages, wait about 8 seconds after the four short beeps. When you hear a single beep, enter the remote operation security code again.

## ERASING THE MESSAGES

If you want to erase the messages after playback, enter the remote operation security code within 8 seconds after the four short beeps at the end of all the messages. After the answering system beeps, hang up the phone.

**Note:** After you erase messages by remote, you cannot recover them (even if you press **SAVE** as soon as you get back to your answering system).

# TROUBLESHOOTING

We do not expect you to have any problems with your answering system, but if you do, be sure you installed the tape correctly and turned on the system. If you still have a problem, this chart might help. If not, take the answering system to your local RadioShack store for assistance.

| Problem | Cause | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| The answering system does not answer and record callers' messages. | The system is turned off. | Turn on the answering system by rotating **VOLUME** toward **HI**. |
| | The outgoing message is not recorded. | Record an outgoing message. |
| | Bad phone line connection. | Check and reconnect the modular phone plug. |
| | | Check to see if the phone works properly. |
| | | Be sure you have electrical power. |
| The answering system records a dial tone, beeping, or the operator's voice instead of the caller's message. | The caller hung up without leaving a message or without using the maximum time, and your phone company does not send out CPC (Calling Party Control) signals. | If this happens often, discuss the problem with your phone company. |
| The answering system does not respond to any button. | The answering system has been turned on by remote. | Turn on the answering system by rotating **VOLUME** toward **HI**. |
| | The answering system is locked up. | Reset the answering system by unplugging the AC adapter from the AC outlet then plugging it in again. |

| Problem | Cause | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| Recordings sound distorted. | You were too close to the microphone or you spoke too loudly when you recorded the outgoing message. | Rerecord the message. Speak clearly into the microphone at a normal volume from about 12 inches away. |
| | The tape head is dirty. | Clean the head using a tape head-cleaning kit (see “Cleaning the Tape-Handling Parts” on Page 23). |
| | The tape is worn out. | Unplug the adapter from the AC outlet, replace the tape, then plug the adapter back into the AC outlet. |
| Remote control functions do not work. | The remote operation security code was not entered correctly. | Enter the correct code. |
| | You are using a pulse dialing phone. | Use a touch-tone phone or pocket tone dialer. |
| | The tone output from the phone or tone dialer is not long enough. | Press and hold the buttons for at least 1/2 second or try using another phone or dialer. |
| | The telephone line is noisy. | Enter the remote operation security code again to retrieve the messages. |
| | Seven seconds of silence have passed so the answering system hangs up. | Call the answering system and try again. |

| Problem | Cause | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| Continuous tone sounds. | No outgoing message recorded. | Record an outgoing message (see “Recording the Outgoing Message” on Page 6). |
| | The cassette tape is jammed or broken. | Unplug the adapter from the AC outlet, replace the tape, then plug the adapter back into the AC outlet. |
| | Slack in the cassette tape. | Unplug the adapter from the AC outlet, remove the cassette from the answering system, and turn the cassette’s hub with the tip of a pencil to take up any slack. Then replace the tape and plug the adapter back into the AC outlet. |

# CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Your RadioShack TAD-285 Microcassette Telephone Answering System with Big Button Phone, Memory, and Remote Operation is an example of superior design and craftsmanship. The following suggestions will help you care for your answering system so you can enjoy it for years.

Keep the answering system dry. If it gets wet, wipe it dry immediately. Liquids might contain minerals that can corrode the electronic circuits.

Handle the answering system gently and carefully. Dropping it can damage circuit boards and cases and can cause the answering system to work improperly.

Use and store the answering system only in normal temperature environments. Temperature extremes can shorten the life of electronic devices and distort or melt plastic parts.

Keep the answering system away from dust and dirt, which can cause premature wear of parts.

Wipe the answering system with a damp cloth occasionally to keep it looking new. Do not use harsh chemicals, cleaning solvents, or strong detergents to clean the answering system.

Modifying or tampering with the answering system's internal components can cause a malfunction and might invalidate its warranty and void your FCC authorization to operate it. If your answering system is not performing as it should, take it to your local RadioShack store for assistance. If the trouble is affecting the phone lines, the phone company can ask you to disconnect the phone until you have resolved the problem.

## CLEANING THE TAPE-HANDLING PARTS

Inspect and clean the tape head about every 3 months. Dirt, dust, or particles of the tape's coating can accumulate on the tape heads and other parts that the tape touches. This can greatly reduce the performance of the cassette player.

Rotate **VOLUME** to **STOP** and remove the cassette. Then gently clean the tape-handling parts with a swab dipped in tape head-cleaning solution, available at your local RadioShack store.

***Illust.***

**Caution:** To avoid damage to the tape head, never use a chemical not approved for tape head cleaning and never touch the tape head with your fingers or any metal object.

## THE FCC WANTS YOU TO KNOW

In the unlikely event that your answering system causes problems on the phone line, the phone company can disconnect your service. The phone company attempts to notify you in advance. If advance notice is not practical, the phone company notifies you of your right to file a complaint with the FCC.

Also, the phone company can make changes to its lines, equipment, operations, or procedures that could affect the operation of your answering system. The phone company notifies you of these changes in advance, so you can take the necessary steps to prevent interruption of your phone service.

## LIGHTNING

Your answering system has built-in protection circuits to reduce the risk of damage from surges in phone and power line current. These protection circuits meet or exceed FCC requirements. However, lightning striking the phone line or power lines can damage your answering system.

Lightning damage is not common. Nevertheless, if you live in an area that has frequent electrical storms, we suggest that you unplug your answering system during storms to reduce the possibility of damage.

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## RadioShack Limited Warranty

This telephone product is warranted against manufacturing defects in material and workmanship for one (1) year from the date of purchase from RadioShack company owned stores and authorized RadioShack franchisees and dealers. Within this period, RadioShack will repair it without charge for parts and labor. Simply **bring your RadioShack sales slip** as proof-of-purchase date to any RadioShack store.

This warranty does not cover damage or failure caused by or attributable to Acts of God, abuse, misuse, improper or abnormal usage, faulty installation, improper maintenance, lightning or other incidence of excess voltage, or any repairs other than those provided by a RadioShack Authorized Service Facility, or transportation costs. **RadioShack is not responsible or liable for indirect, special, or consequential damages arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of the product or other damages with respect to loss of property, loss of revenue or profit, or costs of removal, installation or reinstallation.**

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This warranty gives you specific legal rights and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.

*We Service What We Sell* *10/95*

**RadioShack**
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